

Brothers of the Christian Schools
RELA F NEWSLETTER



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Editorial

Dear readers of this News Letter N°23, by way of editorial, here are some stimulating reflections of Brother Dominique Samné. You will grasp by yourselves, I believe, the relevance and the accuracy. Many Brothers in the Region have known him as novices' master. He was a Visitor and then Institute's General Councillor from 1993 to 1997. His mandate was interrupted by his sudden death on August 5, 1997...

He used to say that "Whatever feelings one may have about inculturation - enthusiasm, annoyance or reticence – It is not open to doubt: **it is a necessity**. A necessity which follows from the logic of the Incarnation (...). **The credibility and force of witness given by religious life** depend (...) on the cultural channels through which it is expressed."

He pinpoints that, "inculturation, to be authentic, must be effected in the spirit of the Gospel. Do not lose sight of it, because I have the impression that in this debate, we sometimes tend to think that it is sufficient to "africanise" in order to render the process easy. It is true, for example, that intercultural religious communities create problems and are sometimes an obstacle to inculturation in certain ways. However, it is equally wrong to think that the creation of homogeneous communities will solve the problem".

We should at least understand two of the paths he proposes about inculturation. First of all, "to strive for a **meaningful religious life**" (...) By this he means that "inculturation is not an end in itself but the means to a religious life **which speaks to the people**. "Let us ask ourselves the following questions: "In what local terms do we identify ourselves? What is our real name? Up to the present, we use approximations or awkward paraphrases to translate "religious", "religious life", "congregation"...

Another path is "to relive in the spirit of the Gospel, **the cultural values** which are recognized as the cardinal values of the great African tradition: solidarity, community, welcome, hospitality... which are also in the great tradition of the religious life.

He is categorical: **"inculturation will be brought about by African religious and only by them**. Religious life – like the Church itself, which is involved in the same necessary inculturation - cannot go on indefinitely wearing a foreign mask. (...) Religious life will become part of African culture or will disappear, and I repeat that religious life will be inculturated by African religious. But this will not be accomplished by just any African religious. It will be done by those who have the gift of foresight, who can rediscover the fundamental values of the African soul, who will be able to give to that soul a religious expression because they will have lived, assimilated and made their own what is essential in religious life. Such people will have something to say. They will be like the "Fathers of the religious life in Africa". They will, in a manner of speaking, refound religious life".

He concludes with a finishing point: **"Inculturation is not an exclusively African problem**. There's nothing more annoying than to be told at every turn: "You must africanise", "You must adapt"... giving you to understand that on the other side of the Atlantic or the Mediterranean, there is nothing more to do because it has already been done; **the backward are always on the same side!** "

Dear Brothers, dear lasallian friends, let us not work just in order to have some future. Let's show some evidence of creativity.

Your Brother in De La salle, Pierre

Brother Dominique Samné, inculturation of religious life in Africa, article published in *Lasalliana* 02-B-08.

I emphasize few passages of the text.

Nairobi : Perpetual vows of Brothers Boniface and Weldet

On Saturday 18th March Brothers Boniface Wachira, from the sector of Kenya, and Weldetsion Uku-batnsae, from the sector of Eritrea, made their final commitment in the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

All the communities of the sector of Kenya, all the coordinators of the different sectors of the District of Lwanga, the parents of the Brothers, including the mother of Brother Weldet who came from Eritrea, participated in the Eucharist presided over by the Auxiliary Bishop David. Many priests concelebrated. Those who prepared and are associated with the success of the feast are the Brother Scholastics, the Novices, the students and teachers of De La Salle Nairobi School, some religious men and women, and friends of the Brothers.



The mass which started at 10 am ended at 12: 15 pm.

The liturgy was colourful with songs and dances.

There was a wonderful choir present throughout the celebration that kept the congregants in the celebration.

Br Francis Njoroge, the Master of Ceremony, used ice breakers in-between to brighten up people. The primary school students have also been present throughout the celebration with dances during the entry procession, bible procession, offertory, and lastly during the thanksgiving hymn...

One of the most intense moments was the long invocation of all the saints upon the two Brothers prostrated before the altar...

The Superior General, after inviting them to express their request, received the vows of the two Brothers.

They proceeded in conclusion to the signature of the commitments and the register of vows. It was after many shouts of acclamation and joy, that the Brothers, in addition to some parents and friends, flocked to congratulate and hugged the two Brothers.

At the end of the celebration, the Eritreans present, Br Weldet's compatriots who came for the event, came forward to present some dancing styles. They sang in Tigrigna (or Tigrinya), the official language of Eritrea, spoken and written too in Ethiopia. For the culmination of the celebration, a meal made up of local dishes was served to all the guests...

*Archives of the visit of the Superior in the RELAF
Coverage by the Brother General Councillor for
RELAF*

Reflection: The Lasallian Teacher

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A teacher is a helper. In *Teaching in America*, author Morrison (2009) exhorts that “teaching is a helping profession” (40). Teachers should not only help students acquire new knowledge but also help parents, families, and communities engage in the educational process.

The Feast of Easter, the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, is full of inspiration. As a Religious Brother and Lasallian teacher, the story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24: 13-35) leads me to draw parallels between the Lasallian teacher and what happened to those disciples on the road to Emmaus. Teaching the whole year long is like being on a journey with students. On the road to Emmaus, the two disciples did not recognize the risen Jesus while He explained Scripture to them. They only came to recognize Him after three gestures: the blessing, breaking, and sharing of the bread. Then, Jesus disappeared from their sight.

There are important parallels to be made between teaching and this story. At the beginning of the school year, the teacher starts on a journey with his or her students. Often time students do not recognize the importance of what they are being taught. The two disciples at Emmaus did not recognize Christ through his teaching; rather, this recognition came through gestures. Frequently, our students come to an appreciation of both material and person through the gestures and character of the teacher. This is exactly what is stated in the book *Educational Foundations: An Anthology*. According to the author Chartock (2004), “Research has shown that what students tend to care about and remember most about their favorite teachers years later is not so much what they taught them, but who the teachers were – their humanity, their character” (4).

The scriptural story of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-40) highlights the student-teacher relationship in a similar vein to the story of the Emmaus disciples. In this story, the

Ethiopian eunuch needed Philip’s help in order to understand the scripture story he was reading. When Philip asked the eunuch if he understood what he was reading, the eunuch answered, “How can I, unless someone instructs me?” (Acts 8: 31).

A Lasallian might paraphrase the Eunuch’s response in light of the student-teacher relationship: “How can students understand the material unless someone teaches them?” A Lasallian teacher is a “Philip.” His or her task is to help students understand the material. Just as Philip disappeared so too it might be for the Lasallian teacher. After helping students understand and appropriate the material, the Lasallian teacher will, in a sense, vanish, leaving students alone on their way, hopefully rejoicing in what they have learned.

Four commonalities can be found between these two stories. First, both Jesus and Philip explained Scriptures to people who did not understand them right away (Acts 8:35 and Lk 24:25-27). Second, Jesus and Philip were invited by their interlocutors: the Ethiopian eunuch invited Philip to come up and sit with him (Acts 8:31), and the two disciples invited Jesus to stay with them (Lk 24:28-29). Third, the three gestures made by Jesus (blessing, breaking, and sharing bread) helped the two disciples recognize Him (Lk 24:30-31). In a similar manner, the Ethiopian eunuch’s baptism helped him to understand the Scriptures and become a member of God’s family (Acts 8:36-38). Fourth, after accomplishing their tasks of instructing, both Jesus and Philip vanished from the sight of those they were instructing. (Acts 8:39 and Lk 24:31). Being a Lasallian teacher involves a noble task. It mandates walking in the footsteps of Jesus, just like our founder, John Baptist de La Salle. The two stories of “The Disciples on the Road to Emmaus” and “Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch” can serve to remind Lasallian teachers that while former students may no longer see the physical presence of their teachers, those students can remember their former teachers. Like the Emmaus disciples after the breaking of the bread, hopefully some of our former students will say “Why were our hearts so slow to understand what the teacher was telling us?”

Brother Pie Nsukula Bavingidi

Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota / USA

Madagascar: Lasallian family doing reforestation in Mantasoa



In his Encyclical, *Laudato Si*, the Pope clearly says that *"man is the main responsible for Climate Change"*. Aware of the rampant drought in our country and in the world today, the District lasallian Family responded positively to the Brothers' Workshop appeal, for the reforestation in Mantasoa, on the Brothers' plot. «As we use trees for the running of the workshop, it is also important for us to reforest" said the Brothers' workshop Director during his speech, before setting out for this reforestation.

We currently know the scarcity, even the insufficiency of rain, not only for the needs of the farms, but also for the electricity production, which interruption leads to long hours of power cuts. Is there a relationship between trees and rain? The answer is yes. Throughout its life, a tree breathes in through its roots 11.4 million liters of water, which is released in the atmosphere in the form of water vapour. This allows maintaining humidity of the forest and the quantity of rain necessary for life. The more you cut trees, the lesser rain you get. There is to this day a process of desertification of some regions heavily deforested by the forest industries.

Every hour, more than 10 hectares of land (the equivalent of more than 20 football pitches) are irredeemably transformed into desert. At this rate, the Earth will look like a vast desert within a decade, and the forests of the Amazon will have totally disappeared! That is why the Pope said: *"There is strong scientific evidence that the human factors cause great harm not only to the nature itself, but also to the lives, mainly of the poor."* He thus considers essential reducing considerably the emissions of carbon dioxide and other gases highly pollutants. This is so crucial for the District lasallian Family to plant trees; thus 1200 eucalyptus trees have been planted by enthusiastic lasalliens. By strategically reforesting, we could attract rain in desert and arid regions such as Sahel, where drought has devastated crops for years and caused famine. The earth is our common home. Therefore, for the respect of this beautiful house that nourishes us, which makes us live, we must protect and maintain it.

*Brother Jean Marc,
District of Antananarivo*

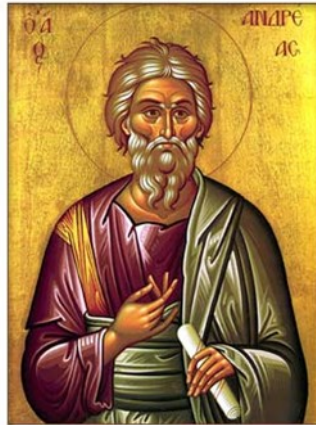


Analogy between the twelve virtues of a good teacher and the icones of the twelve Apostles

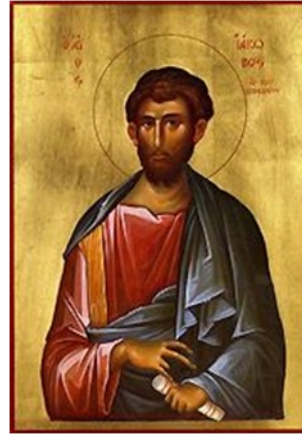
Wisdom: Simon Peter



Piety: Andrew



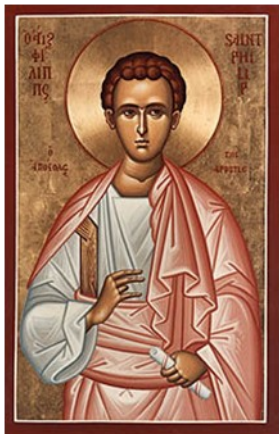
Vigilance: James, son of Zebedee



Humility: John



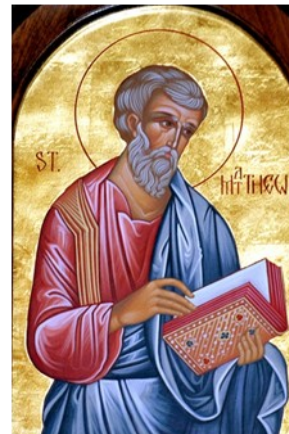
Gentleness: Philip



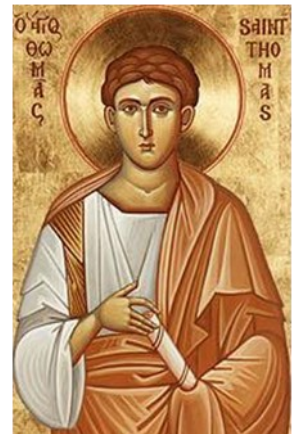
Prudence: Nathanael



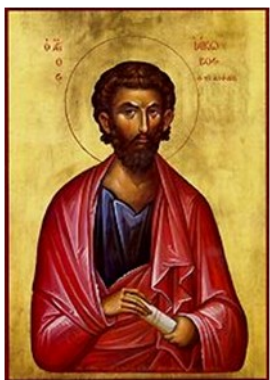
Gravity: Matthew



Reserve: Thomas



Silence: James, son of Alphaeus



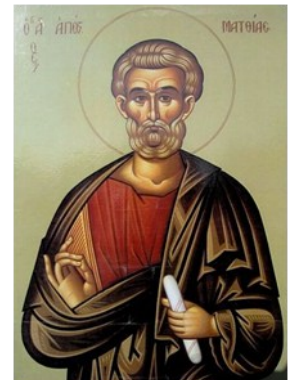
Zeal: Simon the Zealot



Generosity: Jude



Patience: Matthias



*Proposed by Brother Pie NSUKULA Bavingidi
Saint Mary's University of Minnesota*

Cameroon : Good news from CEB-DLS of LOMIÉ

The school year 2016-2017 has plenty of good news for the Basic Education Centres – De La Salle of Lomié. We are pleased to share with you some of this good news the Brothers and their collaborators experience in the work with the Baka pygmies in Lomié, Cameroon.

In the course of the first term, the first Good News in Lomié was the visit of the Brother Superior Robert Schieler to the community of Lomié. This was a time of delight shared by the educational community of CEB-DLS: students, Baka parents and CEB-DLS staff who undertook to organize a fraternal welcome and in a very inculturated style to the Brother Superior and his General Councillor for RELAF, Brother Pierre Ouattara. This memorable visit remained in each of us as a stimulant and a strong sign of encouragement in our difficult mission with the poor in Cameroon eastern region.

The second good news has been the presence of Father Andrès Garcias Fernandes, from Spain to Lomié. Father Andrès is a member of the congregation of the Consolata Missionary Priests (Italian Foundation). They are in Wamba diocese, in the Democratic Republic of Congo. They have been working with the East DRC Batwa pygmies for some years. Father Andrès spent ten days with the Brothers in Lomié, from 10 to 19th February 2017. His objective was to understand how the method ORA started with the Baka? How the organization and the running of the CEB-DLS are established? To find out, if possible, the footsteps of the pioneers (Father Robert Brisson, Br. Antoine Huysmans and the Spiritan Sisters) who undertook the pastoral work with the Cameroon pygmies nearly more than forty years ago.

After visiting the Basic Education Centres and discussed with the Brothers of Lomié and Diang, some educators and some nuns who continue to work with the Baka pygmies, Father Andrès went back with a bag full of ideas and experiences to "replicate". We wish them success in their project of pastoral care and development with the Batwa pygmies of the DRC. The Brothers' community was also pleased to have had several Eucharistic celebrations during this visit, which was a very good new to stimulate our commitment in this education work of Baka children pygmies.



The third piece of good news is the acquisition of a new car for CEB-DLS and the Brothers' community in Lomié. During the weekend of the National youth Day, the Brothers, the youth from Raphael Louis Rafiringa Home, students' parents, and educators welcomed with joy the arrival of a new car. It is a Toyota brand pick-up, HILUX type white double cockpit equipped with a beacon light. It was received in Lomié with cheers and shouts of joy from the young Baka students in the Home. The new car was blessed after a thanksgiving mass on March 12, 2017. It facilitated straight away the tour of Father Andrès in the CEB-DLS. We take the opportunity to express our gratitude to our main funder Proyde and their various partners for this generous donation. We hope this additional means will help amplify our activities and optimize the monitoring of achievements with the entire educational community of CEB-DLS of Lomié. Now, we are assured that the major obstacle - the terrible forest tracks, can be bypassed for a while. Many thanks also to the Brother Visitor and the Brother Bursar who have supported this project up to its concrete realization.

Finally, the fourth good news is the growing number of students in the CEB-DLS. At the end of the second term, we almost reached 750 students. This number had never been reached since the opening of the Brothers' Community in Lomié and the opening of the centres in 2007. We are overjoyed. We are therefore pleased to see 750 children can enjoy their inalienable right to education through our efforts and those of our collaborators and financial partners. We extend our sincere thanks to all those who, near or far, bring us their support in the fulfilment of this noble mission.

Dear faithful readers of Relaf-News, this is some good news that the Brothers in Lomié want to share with you all who find joy in reading the RELAF news.

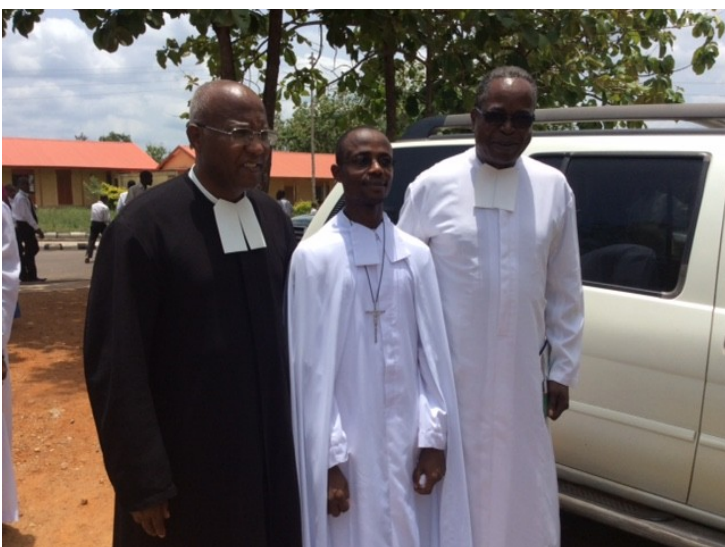
Brother Gilbert OUILABEGUE
District of Central Africa

Nigeria : Perpetual vows of Brother Peter Damian



On Saturday, April 1, nearly all the Brothers of the Sector of Nigeria were in Ondo for the celebration of the perpetual profession of Br Peter Damian. The Mass was presided over by Bishop Jude Ayodeji Arogundade, Bishop of Ondo, and the vows were received by Br Ghebreyesus, Visitor of Lwanga District. The Eucharist was celebrated in Saint Joseph of Ondo church and the festive part was held at La Salle College next to the parish. We can say that the Sector, for the occasion, did their best. After the meal, there were ballets, dances and musical entertainment throughout the afternoon.

Archives of the visit of the Superior in the RELAF



Nigeria : End of Second Term Academic Session at Mount La Salle College, Naka



“What has a beginning always has an end.”

The Second Term 2016/2017 Academic Session came to a close on the 7th April, 2017. Brother Visitor who witnessed the closing ceremony expressed satisfaction over the general conduct of the school and the performances of the students. He congratulated the Staff and Students on their work and commitment. He congratulated especially students who won awards in their academics and other aspects of the school life. He promised support to the school and its activities.

The Sector Coordinator, Br. Kesiki Simon, on his part also expressed delight on the students’ performances and encouraged them to do more. He thanked the Staff for their dedication to the service of humanity through education.

Brother Patrick OBAM

Sector of Nigeria

Abidjan : The presence of the Superior General at St Miguel Scholasticate

In his responsibility to be closer to his Brothers and be a witness of their community, missionary, and communion life with God, the Superior General, Brother Robert Schieler has been a member of Saint Miguel Community in Abidjan from 31st March to 04th April and we had the honour to have him among us. During this canonical visit, he successively met the staff and the Brother Scholastics; moments during which he congratulated, encouraged and motivated the formation team for their ministry and expressed his joy to see the young people who have the desire to serve Christ in our Institute. He also emphasized the courageous character of the Brother scholastics for their choice of life despite the multiple calls of the world and has urged them to a greater commitment and to a renewed perseverance in their life as consecrated men. He did not fail to reiterate his willingness and enthusiasm - reference made to the objectives that he set at the beginning of his mandate - to be closer to his Brothers



and to motivate them in the realization with generosity and dedication of our common mission. The Superior General, in his great kindness shared a day of courtesy with the Brothers in Akwaba and the home children. We remember him as a Brother of an exemplary simplicity, expressed in the generous welcome of all. Notwithstanding the fact that French language is a difficulty in the communication, he expresses his willingness to enter in communication with everyone. Our communication has been possible with him thanks to the presence of Brother Ferdinand, from the delegation of Rwanda. In addition, he discussed with CELAF students and endorsed the concerns they raised, and the whole CELAF community hopes to see solutions regarding these concerns. All the students experienced satisfaction of having communicated with him.

We were filled by this presence of the Superior General and we renew our gratitude for his availability and for having shared with us during these five days.

Brother Séverin

Saint Miguel Scholasticate, Abidjan

Nairobi: Meeting of the Superior general with the Scholastics

Brother Robert Schieler, the Superior General of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, accompanied by Brother Pierre Ouattara, the General councilor for RELAF, met with Brothers scholastics of the Lwanga district of Africa on 16th march 2017 at De La Salle International Scholasticate, Nairobi – Kenya.

He started off his talk by reminding the Brothers that we are called by God, consecrated and send out to the young to offer human and Christian education.

The Superior said that our primary call as Brothers of the Christian Schools is to be classroom teachers, a very noble



vocation given to us by God. He further reminded the Brothers that temptation of abandoning this noble and humble ministry is great and that as Brothers, we need to have a constant reflection on the reasons why we become Brothers in the first place. He strongly cautioned the Brothers that we are never called to be administrators, principals, directors or head masters but instated, we are called to be in the classroom teaching those entrusted to our care. He went on to say that, “those positions are just an added responsibility and not the main thing. Therefore, the positions should never at any given time cloud of minds and prevent us from understanding the real meaning of our vocation as Brothers”.

The Brother Superior General also commented on the vow of association for the educational service of the poor, which is the first vow pronounced by all Brothers of the Christian schools in the vow formula. He emphasized on the need to pay attention to the signs of time and encourage the Brothers to embrace the spirit of shared mission. He further added that a lot has changed from the time of our founder and therefore the Church and the Institute are inviting all Brothers to respond to these changes appropriately. Moreover, one of the elements concerning the signs of time that he did stress is the need to work together and by association with our lay partners, something well stipulated in our revised Rule.

He updated the Brothers that the Institute is putting measures in place to ensure that our lay partners are well trained and formed in the Lasallian spirituality. He reminded the Brothers that God has blessed us with few vocations and many lay people who are dedicated to the Lasallian traditions. This statement reminded the Brothers of the words of our founder St. John Baptist De La Salle famous statement that goes “this work is not ours but God’s work”

Brother Michael Otieno

District of Charles Lwanga

Nairobi: Annual Swimming Gala at La Salle Nairobi School



Teachers, parents and pupils of La Salle School Nairobi took part in an annual swimming gala which was held at Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB) leadership center in Nairobi on the 16th February, 2017.

Pupils in Red, Blue, Yellow and Purple houses took part in different swimming races among them; Individual medley, Noodle race short course, Kickboard short course, Front crawl both short and Long course, Balloon in the water, Free style, Piggy on the back, Breast stroke, Butterfly, Back stroke, Pushing race, Medley relay, and Free style relay. Parents and the entire staff took part in a free style swimming race.

The best overall house was Red, which was presented with a trophy as the annual winning team, followed closely by purple house who took the 2nd position, and were also presented with a trophy as the second best. Yellow house took the 3rd position and lastly, Blue house at 4th position. The third and the fourth placed houses were also presented with trophies. No house went home empty handed.



The Champion for the year 2017 Swimming Gala was Maya Chepngetich Rotich, a standard five pupil who showed exceptional swimming ability and emerged the best pupil overall. She received a trophy bearing her name with the title “La Salle 2017 Swimming Gala Champion.” She will retain the title “The swimming champion” until the next swimming gala which will be held in 2018.

The First, Second and Third positions in each category received Gold, Silver and Bronze medals respectively. Other participants and group activities received Certificates of participation. “These are some of the activities we want our pupils to get involved in, one parent commented. It is also worth noting that the turn-up for the event and the participation were absolutely incredible, he added.

Other than academics, we involve our pupils in variety of co-curriculum activities such as Tennis, Taekwondo, Skating, Swimming, Soccer and Music, David Busuru, the patron of Lasallian movement in the school commented. Since the official opening, we have participated in a number of activities with other schools such as National Swimming Association competition held at Cambridge International School Nairobi.

It was an in-house competition and fun as well since most Pupils, Staff and Parents got a chance to participate at least in one activity. It also showed a united Lasallian family and very supportive and committed parents since they came in large numbers to support their children as well as also taking part in the event.

*Brother Michael Otieno
District of Charles Lwanga*



Kenya : Workshop for Young Lasallians

Brother Oscar Okoth, the Principal of Mwangaza College gave a talk to Young Lasallians of Mwangaza College with the aim of enlightening them about Lasallian activities and the mission of Brothers of the Christian schools in Kenya and around the world. This took place at the college in Nakuru.

The talks were geared towards elucidating Lasallian mission and role among young people entrusted to the Lasallian family. It was also meant to create students' awareness about St. John Baptist De La Salle.

Brother Oscar went further and shared in details about the activities of Lasallian family around the world, the life of St. John Baptist De La Salle, the founder of Brothers as well as what Brothers stands for in Kenya and beyond.

At the end of the workshop, the students at the college got a gist of who St. John Baptist De La Salle and his contri-



bution on matters of education. They also got an idea about the Brothers' work in Kenya and in the world in following the footsteps of De La Salle.

The main challenge the students expressed to their principal is lack of enough literatures and materials on the lasallian mission in Kenya and in the world at large. They requested their principal if he can make some arrangements and get some few copies for references.

The students were captivated and expressed their gratitude to Brother Oscar for having taken his time to give the talk. "We now understand the lasallian mission and its vision in the world," Pius Ng'ang'a, the chairperson of Lasallian movement at the college commented.

Bro. Michael Otieno
District of Charles Lwanga

Reflection : The Lasallian Family towards its maturity

The past forty years of the lasallian heritage history have been witnesses of the management, birth and the first steps of this new-born lasallian family and which, henceforth is part of the new ecclesial ecosystem. The lasallian charism is no longer exclusively identified to the vocation of the Brother. It begins to incarnate in several states of life or life projects that share the lasallian mission.

Let us see, in the light of the most decisive lasallian events of the past forty years, how this frame has been gradually incorporated.

The recognition of the positive role of the Lay partners

The 39th General Chapter (1966-1967) has overcome the mistrust, or simply the resignation, which existed up to then on the participation of lay teachers in the educational works of the Institute. After considering this participation as a "lesser evil" (1946 general Chapter), it has come to be considered in a positive way. The main document of the 39th General Chapter, the "Declaration on the Brother of the Christian Schools in the world today," has established the foundations which have allowed the Institute to advance on the path of communion and to involve lay educators in the lasallian charism, even if the practical applications proposed by this "Declaration" are still shy (*see N° 46.3*)

The subsequent General Chapters will gradually expand the horizon. The year 2000 will evoke thus the journey made: "We also became aware of many successful experiences here and there on the participation and the recognition in principle and in fact" of the lay partners (p. 13). What is said of the role of women in the lasallian mission is even more striking if one remembers that the 1946 Chapter had prohibited any female presence in a lasallian school: "We note with joy that women have a growing presence and an increasingly significant role in the lasallian Mission" (p. 24)

The 44th General Chapter (2007) was not limited only to recognizing the role of the lay partners. It is directed to the Brothers and the media to assume the new ecclesial context as a challenge to integrate into and to discover the specific role they have to play there. The identity of the Brother is deeply affected by the new participation of lay people in the lasallian charism.

Since the 66-67 General Chapter until today, the ecclesial context in which the Brothers are found has substantially changed. We are challenged to be present. In other words, to live and to develop the Association for the educational service of the poor with the men and women who participate in the spirituality, mission and the lasallian charism.

This new ecclesial and lasallian context is for us, Brothers, a challenge to live the Association for the educational service of the poor in an open manner, integrated with other Lasallians, especially with those who want to associate themselves with us. The question for us is the specific role that, as consecrated, we have to play in supporting the work of all in the Lasallian mission. (Circular 455, 3, 2.1)

The awareness and the official proclamation of the lasallian family

The 40th General Chapter (1976) witnessed the official commitment of some lay, the first members of Signum Fidei, in the lasallian mission. It was the sign of that which was in the process of being born in a more open context. The General Chapter becomes aware of this novelty; it officially records it and invites the Brothers to make known to all the members of the educational community "the different degrees of belonging to what is called 'the lasallian family'" (Circular 403, proposal n° 6).

The 41st General Chapter (1986) is therefore directed formally to the lasallian family in a message. It mandates, in addition, the General Council (proposal No. 6) to prepare a "Letter for the lasallian family". The Chapter specifies in its message that the latter is composed of "all of the people, groups and movements which all emerged from the experience and the pedagogy of Saint John Baptist De La Salle." It indicates that the "Brothers' communities" (and not Brothers individually) are "like the "heart" of this lasallian experience as well as the "Faithful memory" of the lasallian spirit ". The chapter lists the various groups which constitute the lasallian family by specifying that they are mainly related to the lasallian Educational work and, more broadly, to the lasallian spirituality.

Reflection : Final part

The "Letter to the lasallian family", published on 2 February 1989 uses the listing and description of these groups: it mentions the "lasallian Sisters' communities", (but without giving the names of their Institutes), because curiously, these Sisters had been forgotten in the message of the Chapter. The letter is also sent to the Lasallians belonging to other religious denominations other than Christianity. It explicitly considers them as "members of our lasallian family, with their own spiritual specificity". We need to recall the double concern maintained since the beginning of the recognition of the positive role of the lay (or more exactly the tension between two poles which persists throughout the development of the lasallian family):

To make the lasallian family a kind of "Marquee" housing all those who identify themselves with the educational project of John Baptist de La Salle.

To avoid the indifference or the "whole is valid". On the contrary, there are levels or degrees of more or less extensive participation in the lasallian family. That is why it is recommended to establish processes that will deepen the lasallian identity to be engaged in the mission, to live the spirituality and develop the communion.

The task of establishing the foundations of the Lasallian Family

The Rule of the Brothers approved at the 1986 General Chapter makes only one explicit allusion to the lasallian family and only to invite each Brothers' community to "welcome the members" (R.64). The invitations to share the mission and the spirituality (R.17 and R.17C) with lay educators are clearer. However, and this is what is the most important, the Rule shows us in the Articles 20 and 146, on what foundation we can build the lasallian family in accordance with the model of the Church communion. Everything starts with article 20 with the assertion that the lasallian charism belongs to the Church ("the spirit of God has given in the Church, in the person of Saint John Baptist de La Salle, a charism "...), and that this charism "drives today the Brothers and many educators". The Rule therefore declares indirectly that the Institute is no longer the owner or the sole recipient of the charism, since the latter can be recognized in people other than the Brothers.

Article 146 confirms and expands what has just been said of the foundations of the lasallian family.

It first recalls the theological principle, already expressed in article 20, stressing that the Church is the owner and custodian of gifts to share: "the spiritual gifts that the Church has received in Saint John Baptist de La Salle are beyond the framework of the Institute he founded. "Strictly speaking, we can no longer say that the Institute may or may not share these gifts that are part of the lasallian charism since they belong to the Church treasury. It is the Spirit who calls each and everyone to participate in these donations in the form that he deems appropriate.

Article 146 then draws a first consequence. It strongly urges the Institute to recognize that the lasallian movements, what we call the "The lasallian family" are a grace of God and a source of vitality for the Institute itself. "It recognizes, in the existence of various lasallian movements, a grace of God who renews its own vitality. "This could not have been said if we had not felt concerned and affected by what happened within the whole of the lasallian family. The Institute recognizes that its life depends on it and that this is not a subject to be taken lightly, because it is God himself who challenges us.

The previous statement becomes an active principle that pushes the Institute to promote the association with the lay lasallians. The rule briefly indicates here on another aspect of what we have defined as foundation of the lasallian family: The lasallian charism can also be for the lay, who participate in the mission, as it is for the Brothers, a way to live the Gospel or to reach evangelical perfection according to a proper spirit. This means the lasallian charism does not commit only to participate in the mission, it also gives birth to new ways to fully live the Christian faith.

From Witness of the Gospel, a text by Brother Frédéric MAKENGO, District of Congo Kinshasa

Lasallian Reflection 3: Lasallians without Limits

1. "BORDERS? I've never seen one. But I have heard that they exist in some people's minds".

Thor Heyerdahl

Willingness to migrate now means little - the majority have been forced to leave their homes¹. We are made to see the painful images of families fleeing from armed conflict, of shipwrecked people shivering with cold and fear, of teenagers dodging adults in uniform, all of them fleeing war, political instability, social insecurity, the lack of opportunities for work, natural disasters or the common denominator of all these calamities: hunger. The lucky ones live to send news of their adventures to those they left behind; for the hapless, the tunnel, the desert, the train, or boat have been transformed into a coffin².

Climate change brings about migrations of animals, plants and ultimately of the poorest people. "The increase of migrants fleeing poverty worsened by environmental degradation is tragic"³. The International Bank and the International Monetary Fund maintain

that this large-scale migration will be a permanent feature of the global economy during the next few decades⁴.

2. The CHANGE that we are already experiencing

To a large extent caused by migratory phenomena, the global demographic is affected by the forces of change between generations, in the family structure, and in the role of religion in society.

Although there are regional differences, the demographic trends that are shaping the world are generally the same. In an attempt, partial and incomplete, at pointing them out, and in order to awaken interest in the international Lasallian community, we offer the following list⁵:

1 65.3 million people worldwide have been displaced by force. There are 21.3 million refugees worldwide; more than half are under 18. In the world there are 10 million stateless persons. Every day 33,972 people find themselves forced to abandon their homes due to conflicts or persecutions. UNHCR. June 20, 2016 (<http://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>).

2 As of October 2016, the number of dead migrants already totalled 7,189; by 2015 the total was 5,729. The deadliest regions are: Mediterranean Sea: 4,812 deaths; the Sahara and North Africa: 1,089; United States / Mexico: 409; Southeast Asia: 208; Horn of Africa: 195 and Guatemala/Mexico: 159. Missing Migrants Project (www.missingmigrants.iom.int).

3 Encyclical letter *Laudato Si'* of the Holy Father, Francis, about caring for the common home. Rome, May 24, 2015. No. 25.

4 Global Monitoring Report 2015 / 2016: Development Goals in an Era of Demographic Change (www.worldbank.org).

5 Based on the article of D'Vera Cohn and Andrea Caumont: *10 demographic trends that are shaping the U.S. and the world*. March 31, 2016 (www.pewresearch.org).

June	
21 May to 21 June	9 th session of the general Council
21- 22 June	Rome- Juba
26 June	South Sudan Management Team meeting
27 June	Meeting Executive Council
28 – 29 June	Workshop, members of South Sudan Boards
29 – 30 June	Meeting of Board Executive Council
26 to 29 June	Good Shepherd Centre
30 June to 4 July	Annual Assembly of those working in South Sudan
July	
1 st – 2 July	Travel Juba - Abidjan
19 July	Abidjan- Ouagadougou
19 to 23 July	Committee prospection visit; Lasallian University in Ouagadougou
23 July	Ouagadougou-Abidjan
24, 25, 26 and 27 July	Formation of bursars
August	
31 July to 19 August	CIL Session
September 2017	
	Publication bulletin N° 257 RELAF Visit
1 st September to 14 October	10 th session of the Council
15 October	Return to Abidjan via Conakry (?)
November 2017	
1 st , 2, 3, 4 November	Brother Visitors' Conference; Noviciate Bobo
28, 29, 30 November	Board meeting Solidarity South Sudan/Rome
December	
23 December	Beginning of Gulf of Benin District's Chapter

To visit web sites of the Regions in the Institute

RELAF: Région Lasallienne Afrique-Madagascar. www.relaf.info

RELEM: Région Lasallienne Europe-Méditerranée. www.relem.org

RELAL: Region Latino Americana Lasallista. www.relal.org.co

RELAN: Région Lasallienne de l'Amérique du Nord. www.lasallian.info

PARC: Pacific Asia Regional Conference. www.lasalle-parc.org